



Community Connections

Issue 8/20, 9th December 2021

Hello from Mrs Gillespie

This is the final chapter of the story of my vision for our nursery and school.

Last time, I referred to the importance of our curriculum. Once we are confident in our curriculum rationale – *why* we do *what* we do – we need to ensure we deliver it in a way that captures the imagination, will and minds of our learners.

Our curriculum must be delivered through highly engaging learning experiences – *irresistible learning*. High quality teaching and learning depends, of course, upon highly skilled practitioners and it is critical to ensure our whole staff team feel confident and empowered to improve their delivery of our curriculum. We want to make sure that children are caught up and excited by learning and develop an attitude to learning that is sustainable and lasts a lifetime.

Here is my vision one last time:

My vision is that Wemyss Bay Primary School and Nursery Class will be the heartbeat of the community, where all are welcomed, nurtured, supported and challenged to achieve their potential, and become curious, creative, confident citizens, through irresistible learning experiences.

I hope that this short series has helped you to understand more about me as a person and as a professional. I have come to realise that we may be a small school but we have big ambitions! We aim to work in partnership with families and agencies to realise these ambitions, with the child's holistic wellbeing at the heart of all we do.

In Wemyss Bay, we are dreaming with determination – determination to get it right for every child.

Take care and stay safe,

Alison Gillespie

Get to know our staff...

Mrs Janet Henderson
Early Years Support Assistant



What I am grateful for

I am grateful for my family and friends and that we are healthy and happy

My Interests

I love watching football! I also enjoy spending time with my husband and children, walking and going to the gym

My Favourite Food

My favourite foods are Italian and Indian, but I do also love crisps!

Places I would like to Visit

I would love to see more of America, in particular California

What I am learning

Just now I am learning about PATHS which promotes alternate ways to deal with thoughts and feelings.

What I am reading and watching

Currently I am reading *Handstands in the Dark* by Janey Godley and I am watching *Grey's Anatomy*.

Something quirky about me

I have a large teaspoon collection that I've been collecting since I was in primary school!

Whole School Matters...

Spotlight on our Values

As part of our focus on the school and nursery values, each class is doing a 'deep dive' into one of the values and providing an insight into what they learn and agree as being important.

Please check out what P2/3 feel about the importance of **achievement** by looking at the document attached to this email. P2/3 are also making a short video – we will forward the link to you very soon.

Christmas Update

A big thank you to those who supported the switching on of the Christmas lights. It was a lovely community event. We were so proud of our senior pupils who sang beautifully.

Christmas Festivities continued with a fantastic Christmas Lunch yesterday and we would like to say a huge thank you to our catering team who made such a delicious spread!

Remember **Christmas Jumper Day** is tomorrow, **Friday 10th December**. Please don't go out and buy a new jumper. An old one, a decorated one, a swapped one, are all perfectly fine. Christmas is a time when we think of others and the proceeds of this day, will be donated to Save the Children. Suggested donation is £1 but any amount makes a difference to those children who really need it, and is much appreciated. Thank you.

Our **Christmas Family Learning Challenge** will be issued on **Monday 13th December**. It is simply an opportunity for you to do some learning together and should not cause any stress or pressure at what is already a busy time!

The dates of Christmas Parties are shown at the end of this newsletter. To minimise transfer of items between home and school, children should come in their party clothes and remain in these clothes for the whole day.

Thank you for your orders for goods being made as part of our **Christmas Enterprise** initiative. Orders will be fulfilled by **Friday 17th December** and sent home in an individual bag. We would advise you to leave the contents until Monday 20th December before opening.

Christmas is of course a time to think of others and we will be collecting donations for our local community initiative, the **Inverclyde Food Bank**, next week. All items will be quarantined either side of delivery. If you wish to send food items in, please do so **by Friday 17th December**. Thank you.

Our Nursery and Primary 1 children are currently recording the **Nativity**. We will send this link to Nursery and P1 families on **15th December**. A link to our whole establishment **Christmas Service** will be sent out on **22nd December**.

Finally, please remember that the school and nursery both **close at 2.30 on 22nd December**. Thank you.

Parent Partnership

We would like to thank our Parent Partnership for gifting a selection box to all of our children. This is very kind and much appreciated. The Parent Partnership are continuing to raise funds for the school and we would like to remind you of the **Christmas Raffle** currently underway, with some fantastic prizes! Please send the money in to school in a sealed envelope by the 13th December with your child's name, class and the number of ticket strips you would like written on the front. Your tickets will then be issued. The draw will take place in school on 17th December. Thank you for your continued support.

The next scheduled meeting of our Parent Partnership will take place on Tuesday 1st February 2022

Covid Update

Recent news about the Omicron Variant has caused increased concerns for many about safety in our communities and schools. We would like to ensure you that we are reinforcing compliance with mitigations daily – for staff and pupils – and will continue to do so as we move towards the end of term. We would ask for your help in this endeavour by ensuring that if your child (over 5 years of age) presents with symptoms, keep them off school and seek a test. Please let us know if this is the case and also inform us of the result. Under 5s can of course be tested too but this is not currently a requirement. Symptoms are of course wide ranging We will continue to keep you updated but if you are concerned, please get in touch and we will happily talk things through. Thank you.

School Uniform

A reminder that although we currently have a blended approach to our school uniform, tracksuit bottoms, joggies and leggings that are worn should be **dark and self-coloured**. We have noticed that we have a significant number of children who do not have appropriate clothing for PE. Please ensure your child has appropriate shoes and shorts on PE days so that they can benefit safely and fully from their PE learning experiences. Thank you.

The days are certainly colder and balancing this with ensuring we have adequate ventilation to comply with Covid requirements can be a challenge. Please ensure your child has a jumper every day. Coats / jackets and appropriate footwear are also important. Thank you.

Learning Matters...

Wider Achievements

We are aware that many of our children engage with groups and clubs outside of school. These activities are so valuable and contribute importantly to a child's learning and development. Being aware of what children achieve outside school and nursery helps us to understand our children better and also allows us to celebrate their achievements as members of our learning community.

This is where we need your help!

Please let us know when your child has achieved something significant. Perhaps this is a new skill such as learning to ride a bike without stabilisers, or perhaps it is more formal such as achieving a grading in dance, music, gymnastics or a martial art. It may be that your child has made their promise in a uniformed organisation such as Brownies or Beavers or is taking part in sporting events such as Triathlon or Cross Country.

Whatever, it is, we would love to hear about it! You can let us know by email or phone, or by bringing in a certificate or photograph marking an achievement.

We are currently considering how to share these achievements with the whole school community – watch this space!

Health and Wellbeing Matters...

Mrs Cushnahan

As we have reached the end of this mini-series on the 5 ways to wellbeing, I decided to ask the children what wellbeing meant to them. Each class were able to talk openly about wellbeing and here are some short quotes from each class:

What is Wellbeing?

Primary 1

“Being healthy and eating good food like fruit and vegetables”
“How to learn and be good at reading”
“Helps you to be friends”

Primary 2/3

“Good feelings, like happy”
“Sharing how you are feeling”
“Being healthy, eating good foods”

Primary 4/5

“Be kind to each other, listen to others”
“To connect with people”
“Mental health”

Primary 5

“Finding a place to be calm”
“Healthy eating and exercise”
“To go outside and look around”

Primary 6

“For everyone, how you feel about a situation”
“Emotions, your mind”
“It’s good to have a growth mindset, be positive”

Primary 7

“Mental and physical health”
“Time to yourself if overwhelmed – calm time”
“Feeling good, sociable with other people”

These quotes show very clearly the positive understanding that our pupils have, and represent a huge shift from the idea of wellbeing meaning only healthy eating and exercise. Our children understand that positive wellbeing is essential in terms of our development; it is an overarching theme running through all we do during the school day. The 5 ways to wellbeing model gives us the tools we need to appreciate what we have and to remain positive in our lives.

[Health and Wellbeing Census - Primary 5, 6 and 7 pupils](#)

We referred in our previous newsletter to the health and wellbeing Survey that all pupils in P5 to S6 are being asked to take part in, with the findings helping our local authority to understand the needs, strengths and possible concerns of children and young people, which will in turn, help to plan future improvements to local services. You may be aware that there has been some coverage of this survey in the national media and at present, this is on hold. We will keep you informed as we learn more.

Nursery Matters...

Mrs Milligan

Hello!

There is always a lot happening in our nursery – it is a busy place! We have been delighted to welcome some new boys and girls to our nursery. They have settled well, are making new friends and becoming aware of nursery routines.

Christmas

At this time of year, we are super busy preparing for all things Christmas. We have made Christmas cards for Compassionate Inverclyde, we have enjoyed our Christmas lunch, we are making decorations, singing our nativity songs and trying on costumes. On Monday 13th December, it is our Christmas party and we will be having a visit from Santa. The children can wear party clothes if they wish. Next week the children will be making the enterprise gifts – these will come home on 17th December. We will also be sending home a Christmas family learning challenge. Please Tweet some pictures of the Christmas challenge!

Clothing

Can we please ask that your children have a few changes of clothes in their bags, especially socks! This is vital to support our outdoor learning. Please also ensure that your child has a jumper – it is definitely chillier these days. Thank you.

Family Matters...

Although Christmas is a lovely time, it can also bring hardship for families. Please do not struggle alone. Come and speak to us, asking for Mrs Gillespie, Mrs Cushnahan or Mrs Milligan and we will support you in any way we can.

Coming Up

10.12.2021	Christmas Jumper Day
13.12.2021	Christmas Family Learning Challenge Nursery Party
14.12.2021	P1 – P3 Party
15.12.2021	P4 - P5 Party Nativity link – Nursery and P1 families only
16.12.2021	P6 – P7 Party
17.12.2021	Christmas Enterprise Goods issued to families Closing date for Donations for Inverclyde Foodbank
22.12.2021	Service link to all families School and Nursery Closes at 2.30pm
06.01.2022	School and Nursery open at 9.00am!

Outgoing Correspondence

01.12.21	Nursery reminder re: Learning Profiles and Doodle Book	email
01.12.21	Parent Partnership communication re: Christmas Fundraising	email
03.12.21	Christmas Light Switch On	email
03.12.21	Primary 5 Violin information	email
03.12.21	Christmas Cracker orders extended to Monday, 06.12.21	email
08.12.21	Reminder for P7 families: Inverclyde Academy Zoom meeting	text message

Thank you all for your ongoing support - we couldn't do it without you!